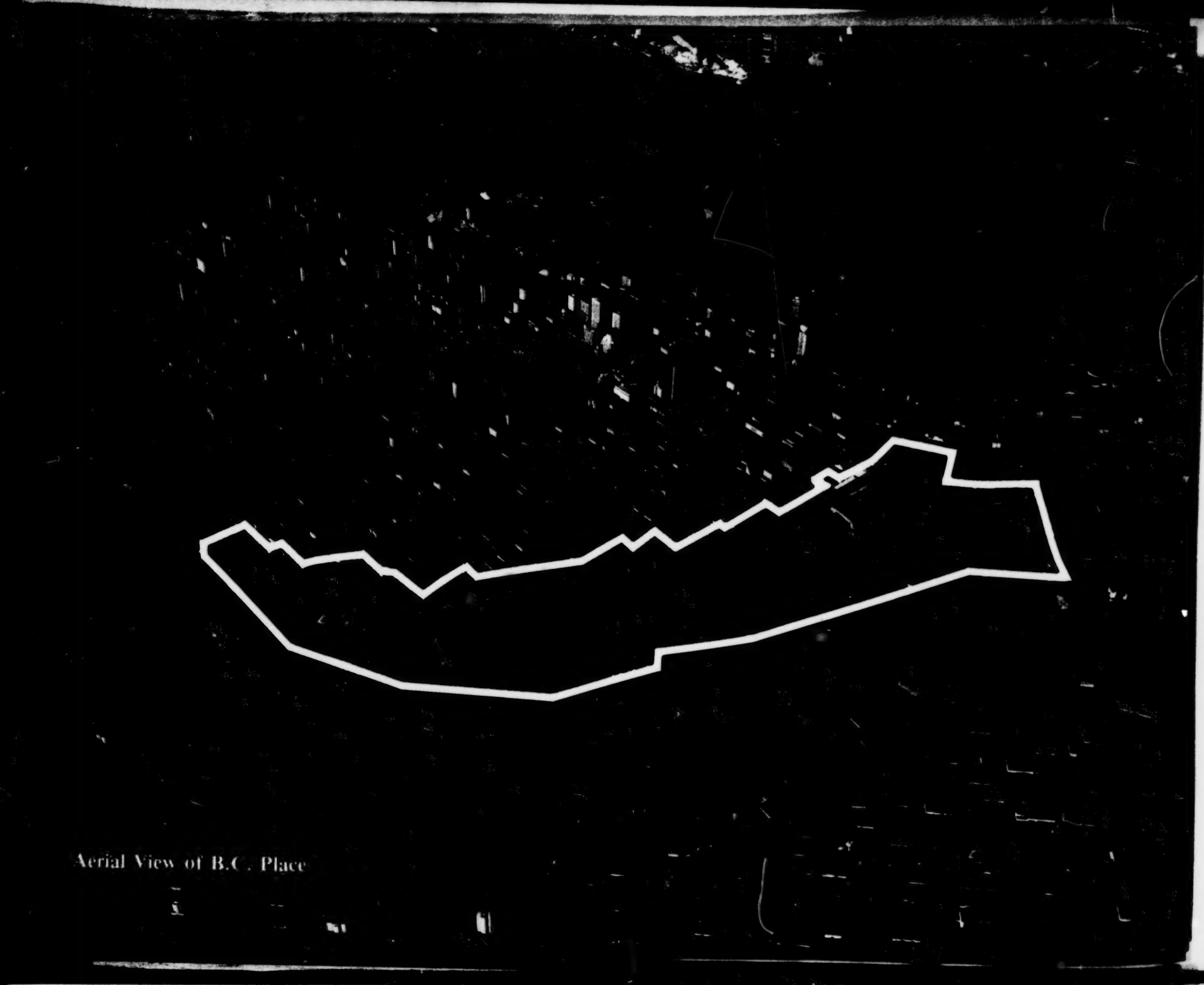
B.C. Place Issues Paper

A joint presentation and discussion of issues by
British Columbia Place, and
The City of Vancouver

June 16, 1982



Aerial View of B.C. Place

Introduction

This paper is intended to outline the unresolved issues that come from a comparison of the British Columbia Place Concept Plan and the City of Vancouver Development Objectives.

Both the Provincial Crown Corporation and the City agree that it is desirable to carry out the redevelopment of the former C.P. Rail yards and other lands in North and East False Creek and have prepared separate documents to illustrate their thoughts on what the redevelopment ought to be.

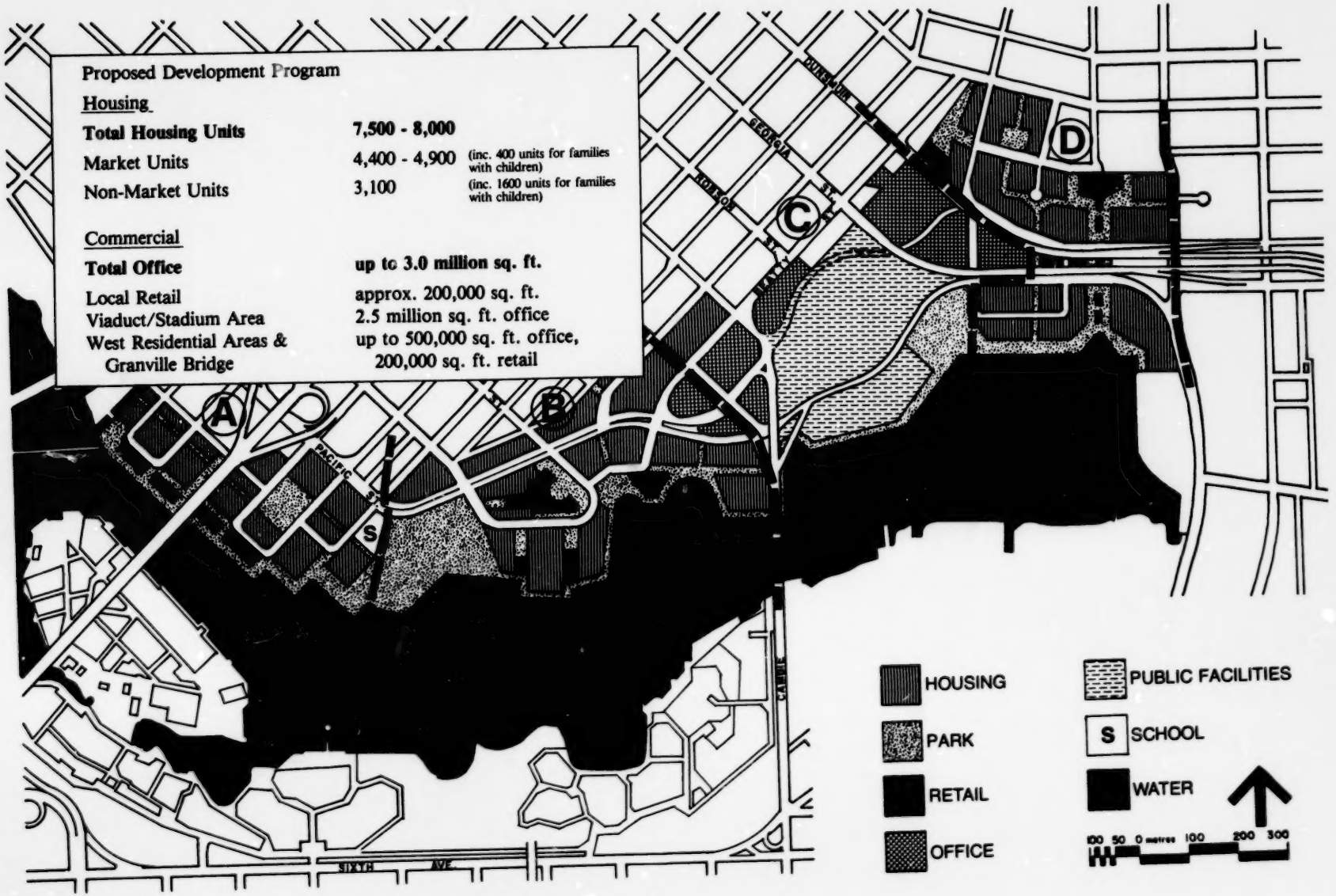
This paper should form the basis for discussion at public meetings jointly sponsored by B.C. Place and the City, at which both agencies will outline their proposals and will welcome public comment and ideas.

The first meeting will take place on June 16, 1982.

Time: 8:00 p.m.

Place: British Room
Hotel Vancouver
900 West Georgia Street

City of Vancouver Development Concept



B.C. Place Draft Concept Plan

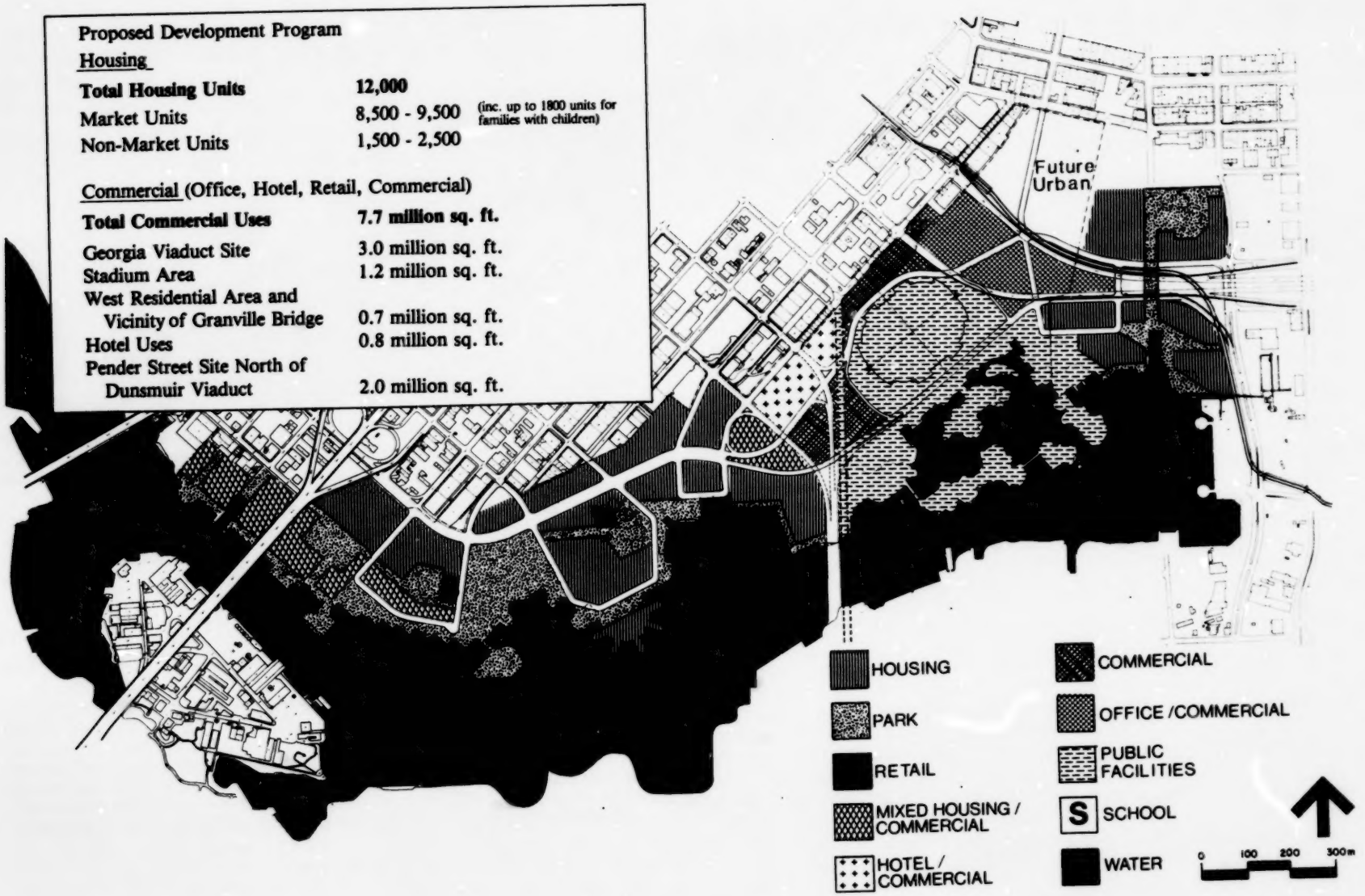
Proposed Development Program

Housing

Total Housing Units	**12,000**	
Market Units	8,500 - 9,500	(inc. up to 1800 units for families with children)
Non-Market Units	1,500 - 2,500	

Commercial (Office, Hotel, Retail, Commercial)

Total Commercial Uses	**7.7 million sq. ft.**
Georgia Viaduct Site	3.0 million sq. ft.
Stadium Area	1.2 million sq. ft.
West Residential Area and Vicinity of Granville Bridge	0.7 million sq. ft.
Hotel Uses	0.8 million sq. ft.
Pender Street Site North of Dunsmuir Viaduct	2.0 million sq. ft.



Public Mandate

Question:
What are the responsibilities of B.C. Place and the City?

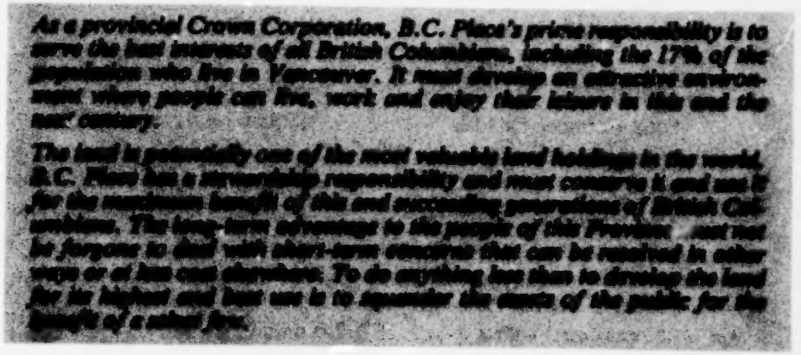
CITY POSITION:

B.C. Place as a Crown Corporation has a public mandate to develop its lands for the citizens of the Province. The City is responsible to all its citizens to ensure that development contributes positively to the future well-being of Vancouver. Private developers are required to ensure their projects are successful not only as individual developments serving their occupants, but also as components of the larger whole which makes up Vancouver.

As a Crown Corporation, B.C. Place is legally exempt from the City's development controls. This special status as a Provincial and public agency brings with it a special responsibility. In seeking an economic return and a strong identity as a provincial project, B.C. Place must join with the City in ensuring that the development contributes to the City's goals.

B.C. Place should work together with the City to ensure there is full opportunity for public involvement.

B.C. PLACE POSITION



It is recognized that B.C. Place has a special responsibility to the City which will indirectly benefit the most from the many amenities provided. We will continue to inform and involve the City and the general public in the planning process as the development takes place over the next 20 years.

B.C. Place is a provincial initiative, and the Crown Corporation is making all of the very large investments required for the development. No City funds are invested, but the City will benefit substantially from the development and gain a very large increase in its tax base. B.C. Place has agreed to pay the full cost of services within its site and to share costs when they serve other parts of the City.

B.C. Place is building the new Stadium and other public amenities. ***B.C. Place will not build the homes and offices,*** but will lease serviced land for building to private developers. The revenues from leases will repay B.C. Place's initial investment and provide a perpetual return to the public.

As a Crown Corporation, B.C. Place has the authority of a senior government but is seeking, insofar as is possible, a co-operative planning process involving the City and other interested parties.

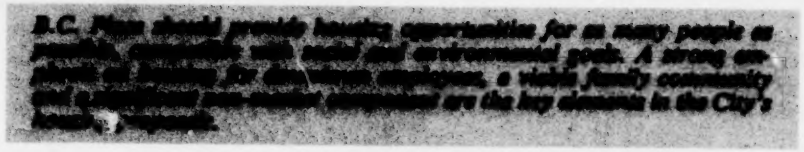
Because of Expo 86, over half the B.C. Place site will not be available for development until 1987. What is needed now is a general framework within which planning can take place, decisions can be made over the next two decades, and which will be adaptable to the changing urban lifestyles of the next century.

Housing

Questions:

How much housing should be provided, and at what densities?
How many families with children should be provided for? And in what way?
How much non-market housing should be provided?

CITY POSITION:



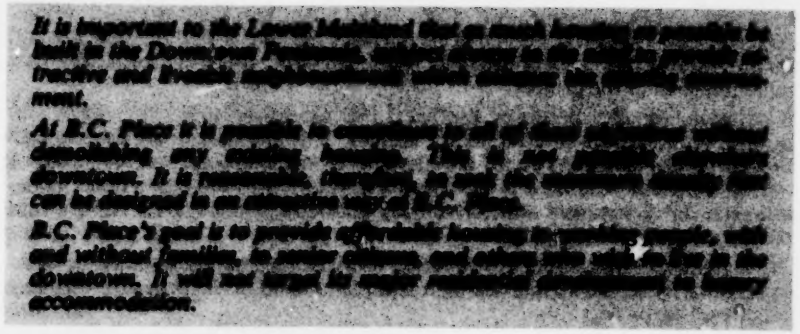
The City proposes that the B.C. Place site be developed at densities higher than on the south shore of False Creek. Preliminary studies by the City indicate that family housing should not exceed 40-50 units per net acre, and that adult housing could go as high as 150 units per net acre in certain parts of the site, producing an average density of about 110 units per net acre. Final densities can only be determined after detailed planning and design of sub-areas of the site have proven their acceptability.

The City proposes that at least 2000 housing units — about 25% of the total 7500-8000 units — be built for families with young children. This proportion is higher than in the West End, but lower than the City wide average. The success of South False Creek indicates that many families wish to live in a more urban setting. The City believes that 1600 of the family units must be non-market to guarantee an adequate number of families to support the facilities necessary for a viable family community. If provision is not made at the outset for families, with schools, community and recreation facilities, in identifiable neighbourhoods, such people will be dissuaded from being there and the area would lack diversity and opportunity. As more jobs are created downtown, and couples with children or single parent families fill these new jobs, then it seems only fair that some affordable housing be available nearby.

Housing for adults can be developed to high densities to create maximum opportunity for providing accommodation for downtown employees and to moderate the ever increasing number of commuter trips. The City is proposing 5000+ units of this type of housing, including 1000 non-market units. Another 500 subsidized units should be developed specifically for the elderly, disabled and those with special needs.

In summary, the City is proposing 7500+ units. Of these, 2000 should be for families with children, another 5000+ should be for singles and couples, and 500+ units should be provided for the elderly, disabled and those requiring special care. 3100 of the units should be non-market.

B.C. PLACE POSITION



Households with 1982 family incomes between $26,000 and $55,000 per annum are expected to make up 75% of the B.C. Place market. This group will be helped by leased land, innovative financing and a variety of housing forms.

Families with children who prefer an urban lifestyle will be welcomed at B.C. Place and good accommodation will be built for them. In fact, B.C. Place is encouraging more families with children than is usually the case. It expects to attract families with children to occupy 15% of its units, more than double the percentage of the existing West End community.

However, the City's position that 2,000 units should be developed in the West Neighbourhood for families with children at a density of only 40 to 50 units to the acre (as compared with 150 units per acre where there are no children) is not acceptable for the following reasons:

- It would be wrong, unfair and expensive to displace three other potential households for each family with children;
- Urban families are content to live at high densities even in non-ground oriented buildings;
- Most families with children can be accommodated, and would likely choose to live elsewhere — especially in the suburbs;
- Families with children requiring subsidized units can be housed less expensively in other areas, as B.C. Place is amongst the most valuable residential land in the Region; and...

- Other areas, particularly the suburbs, already have the schools and amenities required by families with children — some of them now dramatically under-utilized. It would be poor economics to duplicate these services and foolish to suggest that the number of families at B.C. Place should be artificially increased simply to justify building new schools.

It is the policy of B.C. Place to provide housing for a broad cross section of income groups. About 15% of the housing may be subsidized, most of it for senior citizens. As B.C. Place housing will be phased in over 20 years, it would be unwise now to speculate on policies of future governments and the method, nature and extent of subsidized housing programs that might be available.

We do not agree with the high proportion of subsidized housing the City proposes for B.C. Place. The City proposes that out of 2,000 family units, 1,400 should be subsidized, as well as 200 co-op units for non-income tested people. Therefore, the City is actually suggesting that 1,600 out of their proposed 2,000 family units would be subsidized to some extent by the taxpayer in the best residential area of the project.

In addition, the city proposes another 1,000 subsidized units for singles and couples, plus 500 subsidized units for seniors. This amounts to a City proposal for 3,100 subsidized units out of the City's recommended total units of 7,500, or over 40%. Every time land is written down to less than the fair market value, this write down becomes a direct subsidy and reduces the revenue that would otherwise flow to all taxpayers.

This high level of subsidy would be unfair to other working people seeking housing at B.C. Place, would burden the taxpayer, and could threaten the financial viability of the project.

Another area of contention with the City is densities proposed in the B.C. Place Concept Plan.

Development potential or densities are customarily measured in terms of "site coverage" or "Floor Space Ratios" (FSR). Five times site coverage would represent a Floor Space Ratio of 5.0 and means that, for example, on a development site of 10,000 square feet, a building of 50,000 square feet (5 x 10,000 square feet) could be built.

B.C. Place proposes average residential densities as follows:

- on land adjoining Yaletown, between Granville and Burrard Street Bridges and close to the Stadium, densities the same or slightly lower than those presently approved by the City for the adjoining areas. This would allow residential and commercial buildings up to five times the area of development sites;
- in all other residential areas at B.C. Place density averaging three times the site area is planned.

Present residential densities in the West End (single family, apartment, and condominium) average about three times development site area.

B.C. Place planners, architectural advisors and consultants say that an attractive, liveable environment can readily be achieved at the densities proposed. There is a strong body of planning and architectural opinion that even these densities may prove too low as demands for central city living with an urban lifestyle continue to increase.

Commercial (Office, Hotel, Retail)

Question:
How much office space should be built in B.C. Place?

CITY POSITION:

As little office space as is consistent with reasonable utilization of land and reasonable economic objectives for B.C. Place. This suggests a maximum of 3 million square feet of office space in B.C. Place.

The City has considered the effect of additional office space built in B.C. Place on the achievement of civic goals. The City recognizes that office redevelopment at B.C. Place may provide an economic return, can develop land not readily developed otherwise, and may assist in transit ridership and local traffic circulation.

However, a large office component will, through market economics, increase the total office development in downtown Vancouver. This will increase regional transportation problems of access to the downtown, and is contrary to the Livable Region Program objective to provide a balance of jobs to labour force in each part of the region. In addition, it may compete more directly with Regional Town Centre development.

Alternative land uses such as housing and hotels meet important objectives to increase inner-city housing and improve tourism potential. At the same time, downtown housing supports the Livable Region objectives and reduces transportation problems. Hotels contribute relatively little to peak hour transportation problems. For these reasons, the City strongly prefers primarily housing development, with some hotels, where these are feasible, over office development.

The preference for housing and hotel use, and consideration of permitted density for office development on adjacent lands leads the City to believe that a maximum of 3 million square feet of office development should be permitted on the B.C. Place site. While precise densities should be determined through detailed planning of sub-areas, preliminary examination suggests maximum floor space ratios of 4.0 to 5.0.*

* FSR — Floor Space Ratio — This is the relationship of building area to development site area. For example a FSR of 5.0 on a 10,000 square foot site means a building of 50,000 square feet (5 x 10,000) could be built on the site.

B.C. PLACE POSITION:

Recent market projections by the City show that downtown Vancouver will continue to grow as the focus of industry and commerce in British Columbia and Western Canada. It is vital that the City equips itself to fulfil this role effectively. Because of its strategic location with respect to transit and ALRT, and its unique situation as the largest undeveloped site in the downtown area, B.C. Place must share in this growth.

B.C. Place has consistently proposed zoning of the site for at least 7.7 million square feet of commercial uses, including office, retail and hotels.

Because much of this growth will not take place for 10 to 20 years, B.C. Place is willing to leave a large part of this potential office area uncommitted, at least until 1987, so that a final decision on use can be made then, using the benefit of proven experience.

Although B.C. Place is prepared to defer some of its commercial zoning, it must conserve its valuable land and require that all sites be zoned and used to their full potential.

We propose that the "Apex site", between Georgia and Dunsmuir Viaducts and adjacent to the ALRT Station, be zoned at 7 FSR* and sites for hotels and offices west of the Stadium at 5 FSR.*

We suggest an interim zoning of three million square feet of offices, plus some additional sites for hotels.

We reject the principle that office development at B.C. Place will increase the total amount of building in the Downtown Peninsula or significantly detract from the "Liveable Region Plan". It will compete for office users who want to be downtown, but don't need to be right in the core. Even without the alternative of B.C. Place, these businesses will insist on locating in the downtown and will not be prepared to move out to the Region.

B.C. Place's share of office growth will relate to its superior location near the Central Business District and next to the ALRT Station. Offices will be built at B.C. Place by choice rather than on other downtown sites. There would not be any artificial distortion of the market or a major change in downtown growth.

Land in the vicinity of the Stadium and the ALRT Station is best suited to high density office and hotel development. City of Vancouver transportation models have demonstrated that offices built here will put less strain on downtown streets than comparable office development elsewhere in the Central Business District.

B.C. Place will offer office sites at prevailing market rates to private sector developers. ***To repeat, B.C. Place does not intend to construct speculative buildings using public funds.***

The density proposed is not high. B.C. Place has suggested three million square feet of commercial use on 10 acres of its Apex site. This compares reasonably with the 2.7 million square feet of office on only 7.5 acres at the Toronto-Dominion Centre in Toronto.

Perhaps we will be criticized that this supply of land (for both housing and office) will stop a continuing rapid increase in property values in the core. Land values rarely go down — the only thing that prevents continual escalation is increased supply, and of this we plead guilty.

If our supply diverts office building from the Downtown South, then it also has the beneficial effect of making more land available in the area south of Nelson Street for housing and will reduce the heavy traffic impact caused by offices in that location.

Development of this commercial space is expected to take 10 to 20 years. B.C. Place will not risk the provincial investment to develop buildings on a speculative basis. If the commercially designated lands have not been leased by the development industry by the time all other residential areas are developed, then B.C. Place will consider their redesignation to residential.

Parks, Open Space and Public Facilities

Questions:
How much park space should be provided?
How should it be designed?

CITY POSITION:

A total of 50 acres of park and walkway is required, additional to plazas and open areas related to specific developments. The City's proposals emphasize two large neighbourhood parks, a continuous waterfront walkway, and a park connecting to the Chinese Garden/Chinatown area.

The City is proposing park development to meet several needs:

- Neighbourhood park space for the 15-16,000 residents envisaged in the City housing proposals, including two large neighbourhood parks of 10+ acres each.
- Major walkways along the waterfront and connections to the Chinese Garden and Chinatown to serve both residents and visitors.
- Waterfront Plazas.
- Children's play areas adjacent to family neighbourhoods.
- Smaller Parks and playgrounds for relaxation and visual relief.
- A pedestrian path system connecting through the site.

The total for the above parkland is 50 acres. This is based on the needs of the projected population, and should be increased if the population is increased over the City's proposals.

The City supports the provision of other areas of open space developed as part of the Stadium complex and other public institutions and commercial developments proposed by B.C. Place. Portions of these areas may be counted as contributing towards the 50-acre requirement if they are specifically designed to serve local residential recreational needs.

B.C. PLACE POSITION:

B.C. Place intends to build on other urban experiences and develop its parkland as a wide variety of interconnected smaller squares and gardens that will be used intensively, open up, beautify and enliven its residential and business neighbourhoods. Also, B.C. Place will develop a seafront walk, two major neighbourhood recreation areas and a gathering place that will offer many interesting and entertaining activities to attract not only the residents but the general public. We believe the water of False Creek, with continous walks surrounding it, will become a huge and magnificent park in itself.

The large park on the south side of False Creek is little used and cannot be considered a success. In contrast the seafront walk, smaller open spaces and active public spaces of Granville Island are strikingly successful and intensively used. This reflects the pattern of downtowns in other cities throughout the world.

B.C. Place intends to provide almost three times the amount of open space that has been normally required by past development practice in the City. Almost half of its land will be in public use, not counting roads, private or semi-private open space.

The initial allocation of open space proposed by B.C. Place (which is likely to change in use and distribution over the years) is as follows:

West Neighbourhood Park	10.5 acres
East Neighbourhood Park	4.0 acres
Waterfront Walk	5.0 acres
Sub-Neighbourhood Parks	28.0 acres
Chinatown Link	1.5 acres
Provincial Public Facilities Area	22.0 acres
Stadium & Stadium Plaza	15.5 acres
Total Open and Public Space	86.5 acres

Almost 87 acres — it is foolish to disregard a part of this space on the grounds that it is in public use, not parkland, because in urban areas this public space is the most important.

B.C. Place residents also will have easy access to Stanley Park, English Bay and Kitsilano. The City still has the prime responsibility for district level parks and has major city lands bordering False Creek to fulfil increased needs over the next 20 years.

Transportation and Parking

Questions:

How can transit be most effective?
How can the traffic impact of major stadium events be managed?
Should dedicated parking be provided for daytime stadium events?

CITY POSITION:

Transportation is a critical element of B.C. Place which can be handled by careful design and operating policy. Solutions require commitments to funding and operation of Park-and-Ride, transit route relocations and to a co-ordinated traffic management plan which involves scheduling of events to minimize traffic impact. The City believes 2000 parking stalls must be provided and dedicated for stadium use for weekday events.

To achieve the best use of transit, the Provincial agencies involved (B.C. Place Ltd., Urban Transit Authority and the Metro Transit Operating Company) need to make commitments to the operation and funding of the Park-and-Ride and shuttle systems and the relocation of the Carrall Yards (U.T.A.) bus storage/ maintenance centre.

Traffic impacts must be moderated through capital improvements, including replacement of the Cambie Bridge, and a traffic and parking management system including reasonable City control of stadium event scheduling. Adequate commitments are required from the various Provincial agencies to finance the improvements and to develop and administer the management system in conjunction with the City.

The City is requiring that 2000 parking stalls be provided and dedicated to stadium use during stadium events. These would serve the general public for daytime events and be part of the parking pool for major evening events and for other activities when the stadium is vacant. The adjoining areas of downtown already suffer from a parking deficiency during the day, and it is not reasonable to expect these areas to provide a parking reservoir for the numerous daytime events planned at the stadium.

Question:

How should the transportation facilities at B.C. Place be designed and managed, and what level of parking is adequate?

B.C. PLACE POSITION:

A road system has been approved by Council, after extensive public involvement, and B.C. Place is now proceeding to build. A plan for use of this road system — together with ALRT, Park-and-Ride, shuttle buses and conventional transit, SeaBus and the allocation of parking by computers — is being proposed in co-operation with the Urban Transit Authority (UTA), Metro Transit Operating Company (MTOC), and City of Vancouver. This will help minimize disruption in adjoining areas, and encourage a very high use of public transportation. The building of housing close to the downtown, coupled with an existing downtown working and resident population, will further limit the number of people travelling to the Stadium by car.

B.C. Place will not abrogate its control in scheduling of Stadium events, but will work in co-operation with the City, Urban Transit officials, Police and Fire Department.

Although concern about Stadium traffic is natural, there is no other place in the Lower Mainland where the Stadium and related facilities could be accommodated as well and with as little disruption as at the focus of the transportation system in B.C. Place and downtown.

B.C. Place agrees it should provide at least 2,000 parking spaces on its lands for daytime Stadium use. Initially, this parking will be at grade, but later it could be incorporated as part of the Apex office complex in multi-deck structures as redevelopment of the B.C. Place site proceeds. This will enable B.C. Place to provide parking for office workers during the day and for Stadium patrons at night.

False Creek Water Body

Question:

Should reductions in the water area of False Creek be considered?

CITY POSITION:

The False Creek water body is a special asset for the city. Water quality should be improved, the water area should not be reduced, and the sense of openness provided by the Creek must be preserved by careful design. Developments projecting into the Creek are not likely to be acceptable. The City does not support the present islands and major marina proposals put forward by B.C. Place.

False Creek is a special asset, like the mountains, the ocean and Stanley Park. False Creek will add immeasurably to the excitement and enjoyment of the central area of the city. The design of B.C. Place can emphasize and maximize the benefits of this body of water.

Water quality is an important factor in the enjoyment of False Creek as a visual amenity, and even more importantly for the pursuit of water contact recreational activities. Efforts should be made to improve the water quality for these purposes, including carrying out a pollution abatement program.

In recent years Vancouverites have come to resent continuing reduction of the False Creek water body. As a consequence, the City believes the water area should not be reduced any further. There should be attractive shoreline treatment and an irregular alignment to the water's edge to permit widenings of the water basin for the creation of bays, views and useable water frontage. These objectives re-affirm existing City policy adopted in 1972 after extensive public discussion.

As high density developments occur around False Creek, more people will make use of it. Therefore, it is essential to protect the recreation potential of the Creek itself. Any marinas, islands or other proposals which reduce that potential should be avoided.

B.C. PLACE POSITION:

B.C. Place wishes to encourage the active recreational use of False Creek; improve the water quality; and preserve and enhance the visual and aesthetic amenities of False Creek waterways and its adjoining lands.

B.C. Place will balance cut and fill in developing its land and reshaping the shoreline. It will explore a range of alternative ways to increase recreational use of the Creek, including a variety of approaches to the introduction of water at constant level into the B.C. Place site as part of its cut and fill program.

B.C. Place intends to make a more active use of False Creek water, and will substantially increase the length of available public waterfront.

To these ends, B.C. Place will:

- remove, in co-operation with the City, combined storm drainage and sanitary sewers that empty into False Creek from its site;
- remove over 75 acres of log boom storage and industrial moorage in False Creek;
- develop open space at view corridors and street ends;
- promote active use of the water and waterfront;
- investigate opportunities for the introduction of water features and other water amenities throughout the site;
- create a shorefront walk system that interrelates with trails and bikeway systems throughout the development;
- with the City, make substantial expenditures expected to improve the quality of at least part of the water body; and,
- make upland and waterlot leases available for the development of additional boat moorage.

An integral part of the False Creek development would be to encourage boating, including public docks, sailing schools, rowing and canoeing as these are activities that involve many thousands of British Columbians.

B.C. Place plans to enhance the marine flavour of False Creek catering to both the avid boater and the countless people who act as "part-time" crews or guests, as well as those who just like to watch.

Vancouver suffers a severe shortage of moorage space and additional marinas should be developed to serve this need. The number must, of course, be balanced against the need to enhance the other recreational benefits and values of this water body.

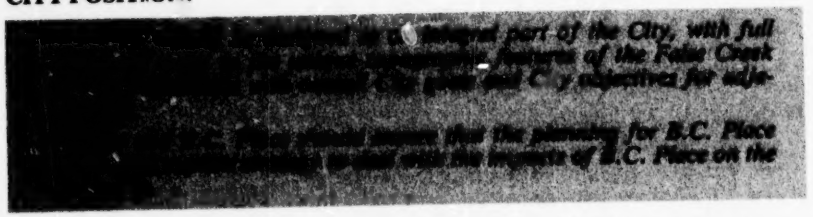
At the same time, it must be recognized that there are many other places in Vancouver to view the water but there are no practical alternatives for sheltered moorage.

Also, the opportunity for islands should not be dismissed lightly. If well designed and located, they can improve the beauty of False Creek, and allow more active use with closer experience of the water in the same way that building canals and lakes within a development can enhance and beautify the land. They also serve to dramatically increase the length of public waterfront available to be enjoyed.

Relationship to the rest of the City

Questions:
How should B.C. Place relate to the rest of the City?
How should the impacts of B.C. Place be evaluated?

CITY POSITION:



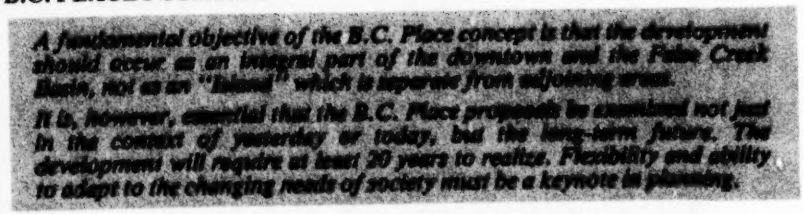
The design of B.C. Place must recognize and reinforce the False Creek basin as a whole. This means considering the way B.C. Place will look from the outside (such as views from Broadway and South False Creek, and from the bridges) as well as from within the development. This also means enhancing the downtown Vancouver skyline and views of the water and mountains. Strong visual and functional links to the downtown and other adjacent areas should be made. B.C. Place should provide large scale drawings, photographs and models which are readily understandable by the general public. These should show the existing situation and the impacts of proposed developments.

Development of the North and East False Creek lands will also produce significant social and economic changes to neighbouring areas. There is a clear need for both levels of government to identify and resolve the most critical areas of impact.

Some of this work has already started on traffic and transit impacts and urban design. Further work is required on these impacts and on possible changes to existing low and moderate income housing in surrounding areas, increased demands for social services such as schools, hospitals and daycare, and other services.

The City and B.C. Place should ensure the planning for B.C. Place produces an explicit strategy for dealing with these impacts, developed with full opportunity for public input.

B.C. PLACE POSITION:



B.C. Place looks for co-operative planning with the City. A special development permit process must be established, as needed, that recognizes the rights and responsibilities of both the Province and the City.

B.C. Place feels it is imperative that such a process be less time consuming than current City systems. The joint approval process adopted should eliminate unnecessary delays in design approval once suitable guidelines and an overall development framework have been agreed.

B.C. Place will continue with its comprehensive program of public information and involvement in planning for this unique inner-city site. As a result of the information already received from public discussion, surveys and studies, amendments to the Draft Concept Plan are already under consideration in preparing an overall planning framework for the development of B.C. Place.

B.C. Place believes that those major land use decisions which are not required immediately should be deferred for subsequent deliberation with Council, but both agencies should proceed immediately on those areas that will be available for development prior to Expo 86.

Once an overall planning framework has been agreed upon, B.C. Place, in co-operation with the City of Vancouver, will proceed to prepare site specific plans for early development areas.

These will be reviewed with the public and the City before development proceeds.

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